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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 001284

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARPI, IO

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [BA](#) [UNGA](#)

SUBJECT: BAHRAIN REQUESTS USG SUPPORT FOR 2006-07 UNGA
PRESIDENCY

Classified by Ambassador William T. Monroe for reasons 1.4
(b) and (d).

1. (C) In a September 4 meeting covering several subjects, Foreign Minister Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa asked the Ambassador for USG support for Bahrain's candidacy for UNGA president for the 2007-07 session. He said that an Asian country will be UNGA president during that session, and Bahrain is Asia's sole candidate. Bahrain has received written endorsements from more than 80 countries. Shaikh Mohammed said he would formally request the support of the United States during his meeting with the Secretary on the margins of the UNGA later this month.

2. (C) Shaikh Mohammed said Bahrain would nominate Shaikha Haya bint Rashed Al Khalifa for the post. She is a lawyer, having received two degrees from Egyptian universities in the 1980's, and was one of the first women in Bahrain to open an independent law practice. She served as Bahrain's ambassador to France from 2000 until mid-2004 (and was accredited to Belgium, Switzerland, Spain, and as PermRep to UNESCO), and currently is a legal advisor to the Royal Court. Shaikha Haya speaks English, French, and Arabic.

3. (C) Shaikh Mohammed said that installing Shaikha Haya as UNGA president, the first Arab Muslim woman to take the post, would send a very strong message about the role of women in the Arab world. He noted that Shaikha Haya would travel to New York with him for the High-Level Event and UNGA.

MONROE